

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1, 6 and 32 and add Claims 33-36 to read as follows. Note that all the claims currently pending in this application, including those not presently amended, have been reproduced below for the Examiner's convenience.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for processing an ink discharge port of an ink jet head provided with one or more discharge ports for discharging ink, the one or more discharge ports being provided at respective discharge port positions on a discharge port plate, the method comprising the steps of:

closely contacting a mask plate having one or more openings corresponding to the one or more discharge ports with a face of the discharge port plate on an ink discharge side; and

forming ~~[[a]]~~ the discharge port on the discharge port plate of a tapered shape that decreases in area in a discharge direction of the discharge port by irradiating plural high energy ultraviolet beams simultaneously through the mask plate so that the beams are inclined with respect to a vertical axis that is perpendicular to the mask plate,

wherein each of the plural beams ~~are simultaneously~~ is irradiated at one of the respective discharge port positions of the discharge port plate ~~to form the discharge port and are~~ is incident at the single discharge port position from a different directions ~~directions~~ direction, the plural beams being inclined at inclination angles that determine the tapered shape.

2. (Previously Presented) The method for processing the ink discharge port of the ink jet head according to Claim 1, wherein the plural high energy ultraviolet beams are incident

upon the mask plate so that the beams are inclined at a same angle with respect to the vertical axis of the mask plate.

3. (Previously Presented) The method for processing the ink discharge port of the ink jet head according to Claim 1, wherein the plural high energy ultraviolet beams are incident upon the mask plate in directions that are equally divided with respect to a circumference of a circle about the vertical axis in the plane of the mask plate.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) The method for processing the ink discharge port of the ink jet head according to Claim 1, wherein the high energy ultraviolet beams comprise four beams, and each of the four beams is inclined with respect to the vertical axis of the mask plate, and incident upon the mask plate in directions that are equally divided with respect to a circumference of a circle about the vertical axis in the plane of the mask plate, and wherein the directions form an angle of 45° with respect to an axis along an arrangement direction of the one or more discharge ports.

6. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing an ink jet head provided with one or more discharge ports for discharging ink and a discharge port plate having the one or more discharge ports at respective discharge port positions, the method comprising the steps of:

closely contacting a mask plate having one or more openings corresponding to the one or more discharge ports with a face of the discharge port plate on an ink discharge side; and

forming ~~[[a]]~~ the discharge port on the discharge port plate of a tapered shape that decreases in area in a discharge direction of the discharge port by irradiating plural high energy ultraviolet beams simultaneously through the mask plate so that the beams are inclined with respect to a vertical axis that is perpendicular to the mask plate,

wherein each of the plural beams ~~are simultaneously~~ is irradiated at one of the respective discharge port positions of the discharge port plate ~~to form the discharge port and are~~ is incident at the single discharge port position from ~~a different directions~~ direction, the plural beams being inclined at inclination angles that determine the tapered shape.

7. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ink jet head according to Claim 6, wherein said discharge port formation step is performed after the discharge port plate is bonded to an ink jet head main body.

8. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ink jet head according to Claim 6, wherein the plural high energy ultraviolet beams are incident upon the mask plate so that the beams are inclined at a same angle with respect to the vertical axis of the mask plate.

9. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ink jet head according to Claim 6, wherein the plural high energy ultraviolet beams are incident upon the

mask plate in directions that are equally divided with respect to a circumference of a circle about the vertical axis in the plane of the mask plate.

10. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ink jet head according to Claim 6, wherein the high energy ultraviolet beams comprise two beams, and each of the beams is inclined symmetrically with respect to the vertical axis of the mask plate, and incident upon the mask plate in a direction at right angles to an axis along an arrangement direction of the one or more discharge ports.

11. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ink jet head according to Claim 6, wherein the high energy ultraviolet beams comprise four beams, and each of the beams is inclined with respect to the vertical axis of the mask plate, and incident upon the mask plate in directions that are equally divided with respect to a circumference of a circle about the vertical axis in the plane of the mask plate, and wherein the directions form an angle of 45° with respect to an axis along an arrangement direction of the one or more discharge ports.

12. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ink jet head according to Claim 11, wherein the ink jet head is provided with one or more ink flow paths connected with the one or more ink discharge ports, each ink flow path having a rectangular cross-section, and each discharge port being arranged on an end portion of a corresponding ink flow path.

13. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ink jet head according to Claim 6, wherein the discharge port plate is formed of a resin.

14. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ink jet head according to Claim 6, wherein the discharge port plate is formed of silicon nitride.

15. (Previously Presented) The method for manufacturing the ink jet head according to Claim 6, wherein the high energy ultraviolet beams are formed by a higher harmonic wave of an excimer laser or a YAG laser.

16 - 31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) A method for processing an ink discharge port of an ink jet head provided with one or more discharge ports for discharging ink, the one or more discharge ports being provided at respective discharge port positions on a discharge port plate, the method comprising the steps of:

closely contacting a mask plate having one or more openings corresponding to the one or more discharge ports with a face of the discharge port plate on an ink discharge side; and

forming [[a]] the discharge port on the discharge port plate of a tapered shape that decreases in area in a discharge direction of the discharge port by irradiating plural high energy beams simultaneously through the mask plate so that the beams are inclined with respect to a vertical axis that is perpendicular to the mask plate,

wherein the plural beams are simultaneously irradiated at a single discharge port position of the discharge port plate to form the discharge port and are incident at the single discharge port position from different directions at inclination angles that determine the tapered shape.

33. (New) The method for processing the ink discharge port of the ink jet head according to Claim 32, wherein the ink discharge side of the discharge port has a different shape than an ink supply side of the discharge port.

34. (New) The method for processing the ink discharge port of the ink jet head according to Claim 6, wherein the ink discharge side of the discharge port has a different shape than an ink supply side of the discharge port.

35. (New) The method for processing the ink discharge port of the ink jet head according to Claim 1, wherein the ink discharge side of the discharge port has a different shape than an ink supply side of the discharge port.